

faintly and demurely, and curl down in a close room two hours a day to hateful practice upon the inevitable piano, whether she shows the least taste or ability for piano music or not. Subject a boy to restrictions, confinements, deprivations, and compulsions equal or equivalent to those which fashion enforces upon the average girl, and he would presently become far less able to maintain his rights than she is at present to advocate her own.

This topic demands a thousand times the space which any brief article in a volume of this kind can properly afford. Dr. Clarke and others have already begun that discussion and agitation which usually precedes long-needed reforms.

#### THE USUAL END OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

With this grade the Grammar School work ends. All pupils who honorably complete it receive an engraved certificate of graduation, which entitles them to enter either High School at the beginning of the next school year.

To most pupils the graduation from the Grammar School becomes at once the height of their scholarly ambition and the end of their formal Public School education.

#### PERCENTAGE WHO COMPLETE THE COURSE.

To such an extent is this true, that of all who enter the High Schools hardly one in seven graduates from them; while the Grammar Schools graduate about one of every five whom they receive, and the Primary Schools one of every three. That is, out of every one hundred and five who enter the lowest Primary grade about thirty-five creditably complete the four years of primary study and enter the Grammar School; of these thirty-five who enter the Grammar School, about seven regularly complete its four years of study and enter either High School, and of these seven who enter the High School one will regularly complete its course and honorably graduate from it. Thus the Public School Department carries completely through and honorably graduates from its highest grade only one of every one hundred and five, or less than one per cent. of those whom it receives into its lowest Primary grade eleven years before.

#### CAUSES OF PREMATURE WITHDRAWAL.

Several causes combine to account for this. Even those parents who have least of, and care least for, education, wish their children to read, write, spell, add, subtract, multiply, and divide. Hence, all parents, with very rare exceptions, desire their children to complete the Primary School course certainly, and usually the Grammar School course as well, if the increase of family expenses and the consequent necessity of multiplying even the smallest possible sources of family income enable them to spare them long enough. But even if its attainment were possible, hardly one parent in twenty as highly appreciates, or as strongly desires for his child an equal knowledge of the studies commonly forming the greater part of High School instruction.

A still more common cause of the increased proportional withdrawal of pupils from the higher grades—a reason so powerful, in fact, as to become almost uncontrollable—is the increased pecuniary value of the service of the child with every year of successive growth. Hence, every teacher of ten years' experience in all grades of Public Schools, can testify that the relative number of withdrawals from this cause alone, after making due allowance for the effects of other natural and unavoidable causes, continually increases with each higher grade.

#### REMEDY SUGGESTED.

A partial preventive, at least, of this premature withdrawal and consequent failure to obtain the full benefit of the entire Public School course, would be the addition of one year to the time now spent in the Grammar School. Such an additional year faithfully devoted to a thorough and final review of the more important branches now imperfectly taught and still more imperfectly learned during the last three years of the present Grammar School course, would make the scholars doubly sure of what they now very seldom thoroughly acquire, and enable them to add some very desirable, practical, and profitable studies which lack of time now compels them to forego, and which they seldom have any subsequent opportunity to pursue.

To a thorough drill in branches as indispensable as Commercial Geography, Business Arithmetic, with Business Penmanship, developed by daily practice in writing Business Letters and practicing Business Correspondence, and including, of course, Practical Bookkeeping, they might add a fair knowledge of Phonography and of such practically valuable natural sciences as Elementary Astronomy, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Geology, Mineralogy, Zoölogy, Anatomy, Physics, and Hygiene, and especially of Botany, which, as presented in such recent works as that truly scientific and admirably simple one of Miss Youmans, is almost an education in itself. The study of nature, in any of its departments, is far better fitted to quicken mental life, develop mental growth, and discipline mental power than any other that can possibly be assigned to young minds.

Among the more obvious and immediate advantages of this additional year in the Grammar School would be:

1st. The High and Normal Schools could proportionally extend and improve their courses, and this, in turn, would give us far better qualified teachers. The present system sends into both those schools pupils so young in years, immature in mind, deficient in mental acquisition, lacking in intellectual discipline, and wanting in scholarly culture, that the almost unanimous testimony of experienced teachers is, that they are compelled to lose nearly or quite the whole of the first year in doing over again, or, oftener indeed, in doing for the first time that elementary, preparatory work which should have been thoroughly done before the pupil was permitted to approach either a Normal or a High School.

Receiving pupils thoroughly and uniformly well qualified these higher schools could enter at once upon their own legitimate work, accomplish it better in quality and more completely in degree, and send forth their graduates with far broader culture, better discipline, and higher honor, than is now possible.

2d. Our Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools would, in turn, receive even more benefits and be able, in still higher degree, to accomplish what they should and would, but cannot for lack of previous culture in their precipitate pupils.

3d. And, chiefly!—many pupils who cannot possibly accomplish, or even attempt, a full three years' course, beyond, or in addition to, that of the Grammar School, could and would gladly remain for the single additional year could it be made to include, as suggested above, such practical and essential studies as the average pupil most needs in later life.

#### RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

The Grammar School is indisputably and emphatically the peoples' college. Nearly ten times as many successfully complete its course and honorably graduate from it as from the High School, and nearly twenty times as many go partially through, but are compelled to withdraw within a year or two of graduation. Hence it long since became, and to-day remains, the true popular University, to a far greater degree than any other institution for free popular education. Consequently, the inclusiveness of its scope, the excellence of its methods, the economy of its management, and the completeness of its success are matters of ten times as much interest to the popular mind and heart. This is clearly shown by the fact that not one citizen in one hundred denies the necessity or objects to the general scope and management of the Grammar Schools, while nearly ninety in a hundred decidedly doubt the necessity and questions the methods of a High School whose chief result seems to be to turn out perhaps ten graduates a year that are fit for admission to the University, and produce this meager result with the minimum of economy and the maximum of expense. If we take proper care of the Primary and Grammar Schools, the High Schools, Colleges, and Universities will take care of themselves. Hence it is fully in order, at least once a year, for those immediately charged with the management of Grammar Schools, long experienced in such management, minutely acquainted with every detail, thoroughly conversant with their results, familiar with their excellencies, well knowing and even suffering from their deficiencies, to do what they can toward calling public attention to these public matters and ask a proper consideration of them. This the present writer, has partially